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Understanding CLIL as an innovation

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Abstract

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) initiatives in schools have become widespread across Europe and beyond in the last decade or so. Drivers for this include the role of English as the language of international economic activity, media and culture, belief in the value of early start and meaning-focussed instruction in foreign language learning, and a policy position which promotes a multilingual Europe. In many contexts, CLIL initiatives are local: teachers and educational leaders with assistance from teacher educators and experts in universities establish programmes, which are then shaped by available resources, human and material. While the commitment, enthusiasm and energy for CLIL at classroom and school levels are essential requirements for educational innovation, they may not, in the longer term be enough for sustainability and ongoing development. This paper examines the implementation of CLIL as an innovation and identifies some issues where wider policy support and coordination may be useful. It draws on the findings of an evaluation study of a CLIL project implemented in four countries, and identifies issues and ways forward for an effective strategy for CLIL in terms of foreign language learning, subject learning, and positive learning experiences for every child.

Keywords: CLIL, communication, cognition, language development

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) is dual focussed instruction, referenced to two separate programmes of learning, typically the foreign language (FL) curriculum and a subject syllabus. CLIL initiatives in schools have become widespread across Europe and beyond in the last decade or so. Factors which have promoted this development include the role of English as the language of international economic activity, media and culture, belief in the value of early start and meaning-focussed instruction in foreign language learning, and a policy position which promotes a multilingual Europe. In many contexts, CLIL initiatives are local: demand by stakeholders such as parents and community leaders, town and city officials, as well as head teachers and teacher education professionals. Implementation of programmes varies as they become shaped by educational and language learning traditions and available resources, human and material (Dalton-Puffer & Nikula, 2006; Mehisto, Frigols, & Marsh, 2008; Wolff, 2009).

There is however, broad agreement at a curriculum theory level on what CLIL at its best should involve. It is conceptualised as broader and more integrated than bilingual education or immersion programmes: in a classic account by Coyle (2005; 2007a) the 4C approach conceptualises CLIL as a curriculum which develops understanding of a *culture*, which in turn has *content*, *cognition* and *communication* components. *Culture* refers to shared understandings and practices, whether in bodies of knowledge such as science, or the ways language is used to share meanings. *Content* involve the knowledge and skills is particular discipline areas. *Cognition* relates to the thinking processes which underpin the ability to understand and act. And *communication* reflects the capacity to use language to link content and cognitions in learning. This educational curriculum approach draws on the work of Vygotsky and Bruner, psychologists who have theorised learning as a process of transformation through interaction and mediation.

This view of curriculum connects with a range of pedagogic strategies, developed in many school contexts, such as the design of classrooms and other learning spaces, the use of electronic resources, the activities teachers set up in lessons, and use of interaction and feedback to promote learning. In the wider context of language learning, and in CLIL in particular, it has generated a growing range of materials and activity frameworks for CLIL practice. Another set of perspectives has come from the Second Language Acquisition field: here the focus is on the CLIL context for task-based, meaning-focussed engagement in a second language which generates opportunities for language learning. These approaches to investigating CLIL are helpful in analysing and understanding micro-accounts which have the potential to contribute to our understanding of learning processes, both in specific CLIL contexts and more widely (Serra, 2007;

Michaeloudes, 2009). What is largely missing from the small but growing CLIL research literature is a policy and practice perspective, an account of what is involved in the implementation of CLIL initiatives within schooling systems, which identifies issues essential in the policy planning and implementation domains. This paper provides such a perspective. Drawing on data and insights from a three-year evaluation of a Comenius-funded CLIL project in primary and pre-primary schools in four countries, it sets out the approaches to CLIL which emerged and the issues and decisions which shaped these.

The PROCLIL project was established in four countries (Cyprus, Germany, Spain and Turkey) to implement and examine issues of implementation of CLIL in clusters of schools. While the official policy frameworks for implementation varied, there was agreement on the overall curricular approach. The project incorporated three common features of CLIL implementation: first, awareness of an emerging European curricular philosophy and pedagogy for CLIL (Clegg, 2006; Coyle, 2000; 2007), second, a recognition that CLIL implementation is local, informed by local conceptualisations of language learning and pre-primary and primary educational processes (Dalton-Puffer & Nikula, 2006; 2007); and third, leadership of CLIL planning and implementation by teacher education institutions rather than educational policy agents. To frame this challenge in theoretical and policy terms, the PROCLIL team developed a shared view of what CLIL involved, based on the 4C framework. It had three broad goals:

- 1) Effective learning of the required subject matter (the content in CLIL) through a foreign language (in this case English), where there is
 - a) no substantive difference between core learning achievements in the CLIL classroom and the expected achievements in the L1 classroom, and
 - b) the curriculum (as set by the school or education authority) guides the teacher and the instructional plan.
- 2) CLIL involves focussed and structured attention to language in learning (in this case, English). This involves active support for foreign language learning in subject lessons through:
 - a) attention to subject literacy (terminology and lexis), much as a primary school teacher of any subject might focus on, and
 - b) attention to phonological and syntactic aspects of this subject literacy, so that an effective bilingual competence is achieved.
- 3) CLIL involves a focus on the pupil, reflected in the organisation and implementation of CLIL within schools and schooling systems. This involves:
 - a) personalised learning where each pupil is supported at their stage of both content and language learning taking into account both the school curriculum and the developmental state of the child;

- b) opportunities for curricular continuity, so that learning achievements in both content and language are built on over time.

This view of CLIL provides for balanced attention to both language and subject, places the pupil and their opportunities for learning at the centre of CLIL policy and implementation, and recognises that CLIL is particularly demanding for teachers (Massler, Ioannou-Georgiou, & Steiert, 2010). They need additional support from schools (for example, sufficient class and planning time) and CLIL experts (those with experience of CLIL implementation in other contexts, or in teacher education contexts) particularly in the initial stages of CLIL implementation, and in providing guidance on materials and activities). An important dimension of CLIL implementation involves understanding CLIL as an innovation as well as an instructional approach. That involves understanding its impact on teachers, on schools and the education system as a whole, and planning for the management of change at all these levels.

CLIL as an Innovation

A key implementation focus was on CLIL as an innovation at different levels: for schools and teachers, for children and their families, and for more remote stakeholders such as policy makers at local and national levels, and publishers of learning materials. To develop this perspective, we took a broad definition of innovation as a tool for understanding the demands and impact on the various participants in CLIL implementation projects:

Innovation can be defined as novel ways of doing things better or differently, often by quantum leaps versus incremental gains. This is consistent with the definition of innovation used by the European Commission's *Green Paper on Innovation* (1995: 1): 'the successful production, assimilation and exploitation of novelty in the economic and social spheres'. Innovation can be on a large scale, e.g., identification of a major new technology, a new business venture, or a new programme approach to a social problem. But it can also be on a small scale, involving initiatives within a larger project or programme, such as a teacher trying a new way of connecting with an individual student. (Perrin 2002: 14)

This characterisation of innovation is particularly helpful in understanding PROCLIL as an innovation in the four contexts of implementation (the regions of Cyprus, Germany, Spain and Turkey involved in PROCLIL). The motivation in all cases involved *doing things better and differently*: improved learning of English as a foreign language, and teaching the subject in question through English rather than through Greek, German, Spanish or Turkish respectively. The implementation involved both *quantum leaps and incremental gains*: in

Spain for example, PRO-CLIL was part of a Madrid city-wide policy of an English-medium component in all primary schools, equivalent to 25% of curriculum time, truly a quantum leap. In the other contexts, the focus was on inclusion of school partners as they felt ready to commit to the innovation. The *novelty* in all cases was an important factor, though in some contexts there was greater levels of familiarity with English as a means of communication than others: in Cyprus for example, many participating schools had teachers who had been educated through English themselves (often in Britain or other English speaking countries), and across the community, many people had family contacts in Britain and Australia, all of which contributed to CLIL being less novel than in contexts where no such familiarity existed. In all contexts of implementation, the project focused on learning, *teachers trying a new way of connecting with an individual student* to meet both personal and community-wide goals and aspirations.

Managing innovation in language teaching and learning has been represented as challenging in the literature. Markee (1993; 1997) and Karavas-Doukas (1996) recount a history of limited success in this field: many theoretically-driven approaches to language teaching had little enduring impact, largely because of a failure to align the innovative practices with established traditions and professional expectations. Kennedy (1988); Stoller (1994) and Crabbe (2003) illustrate in particular contexts of innovation how planned change may fail to have an impact. These analyses following Fullan (1991) on wider contexts of educational innovation, establish grounded, stakeholder perspectives as central. Unless immediate stakeholders, in this case teachers, children and their parents, are informed, enabled and committed, the novel practices do not have a good chance of success. They will not recruit the effort, energy, and enthusiasm to overcome initial setbacks, become part of a strategy which connects effectively with local traditions and resources, and be understood by a critical mass of local stakeholders as adding value. Recent accounts from the field of language programme and project evaluation (Kiely & Rea-Dickins, 2005; 2009; Lamie, 2005; Waters, 2007) emphasise the engagement, participation and commitment of practitioner stakeholders as a prerequisite for success: essentially, the teachers must be believers. The emphasis of establishing ownership of the innovation among local stakeholders reflects Wenger's communities of practice theory (Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002): high levels of engagement foster interaction and mediation, which in turn lead to learning and mutual support. Such activity constitutes a very positive environment for managing an innovation such as the introduction of CLIL.

This perspective on CLIL as an innovation is helpful in understanding two aspects of the implementation of CLIL: diversity, and productivity. First, it pro-

vides a means for understanding how CLIL, a pedagogic initiative with core, shared characteristics, is different in each context of implementation. Local factors determine the nature of the CLIL challenge and the ways in which it needs to be supported. Second, understanding CLIL as an innovation places the language element centre stage: CLIL is not introduced because learning in subject areas such as science or art is ineffective or insufficient; rather it is to support more effective foreign language learning, a view which is clear from much of the recent literature (Lasagabaster, 2008; Mehisto et al., 2008; Wolff, 2009). This reality establishes the focus on a central tension in CLIL implementation: the goal is not to transform the subject lesson into a FL lesson: subject learning objectives remain central as an instructional goal, and a pupil learning entitlement. However, CLIL lessons take on additional learning objectives, in the form of FL learning opportunities, and it is the challenge of integration here that is the core innovation. Further, this analysis of learning goals in CLIL suggests that the innovation has a significant productivity dimension: it involves teachers aiming for more learning in their lessons than in comparable L1 lessons. And this increase in productivity on the part of teachers must have appropriate increases in investment and support. Teachers must be assisted in transforming their practice to incorporate the innovative language learning perspective, if they are not to feel ineffective, disengaged, and ultimately alienated (Fullan, 1991).

Understanding these diversity and productivity dimensions is important in understanding how teachers experience CLIL implementation, and the extent to which this experience merits increased resources. It may also explain a reluctance among some school headteachers to become involved in CLIL. In Cyprus, Germany and Turkey, where engagement with CLIL is to a large extent, a school-level decision, some school leaders feel that the advantages of CLIL do not outweigh the challenges and risks.

The Approach to Evaluation

The approach to evaluation illustrates the diversity of implementations within the PRO-CLIL project (Dalton-Puffer & Nikula, 2006). The evaluation was developed to both reflect this diversity, and capture the ways in which different challenges, needs and opportunities emerged and were engaged with. The first design decision was to avoid a focus on outcomes, that is measurement of language learning achievements for comparative purposes, and to focus instead on documentation of implementation processes. This orientation was informed by the shortcomings of outcomes evaluations of language learning initiatives (Berretta & Davies, 1984; Kiely & Rea-Dickins, 2005; Lasagabaster, 2008). Instead we developed a stakeholder approach which comprised i) attitude questionnaire

and interview studies customized and managed by local PROCLIL leaders; ii) data on classroom implementation, materials and teacher training as gathered by PROCLIL teams; iii) periodic reports from the project contexts; and iv) documentation from meetings and workshops such as minutes, reports and summaries of issues and discussions. This descriptive stakeholder approach allowed for engagement with emerging issues as well as systematic analysis of materials, and exploration of classroom interaction issues (Kiely, 2008).

This paper focuses on key issues at the implementation level in the four contexts of CLIL. It presents the findings of the evaluation, in terms of implications for the development of CLIL in these contexts, and more widely, contributing to initial implementation elsewhere.

Issues of Policy and Practice

In this section I discuss the issues for CLIL planning and implementation which emerge from the evaluation of PROCLIL. These issues relate to support from outside schools, support within schools, the challenge of continuity in language learning, and materials for teachers starting out in CLIL. These are by no means a comprehensive set of issues which need consideration – I do not discuss here the policy aspects of assessment frameworks for CLIL, or the issues of level of FL proficiency of CLIL teachers, for example – but they have the potential to help policy-makers decide on some initial steps for the development of CLIL as a successful innovation.

Support from Outside the School

The CLIL initiatives in this project were led by the teacher education institutions and the evaluation illustrates a range of ways in which these can play an essential role in the success of CLIL. They have expertise in the curricular issues (sometimes in language only rather than balanced expertise in language and subject), the resources available and in techniques for the classroom. They are often frequent visitors to schools and classrooms, and have a practitioner understanding of practices such as classroom management, support for pupils with diverse learning needs, and assessment. They also have an awareness of networks, whether web-based or through conferences, and capacity to advise teachers on training opportunities and funding across Europe – see Massler & Burmeister (2010) which has chapters based on the experience of PROCLIL. As might be expected, the education authorities and regional administrators who have the expertise to support schools and teachers on a range of issues, do not have this capacity in CLIL. The evaluation shows that in the three contexts where

there was little wider support (Germany, Cyprus and Turkey) for CLIL implementation, the teachers felt the engagement of teacher educators was very effective, particularly in providing information to children and their parents, induction and ongoing training for teachers, support with materials, hand-on advice through personal contact and by telephone and email, on emerging issues, and induction to support and networks beyond the school.

This support from teacher education institutions contributed to two important indicators of success. First, there is evidence in many schools of increasing confidence among teachers by Year 3. This is evidenced by reports of teachers needing less support by the third year, and of teachers volunteering to contribute to teacher development workshops, by teachers moving from a demanding problem of lack of materials to a situation where the challenge was finding the time to review, select from and adapt the available materials. Another indicator of teacher confidence and enthusiasm is the trend of teachers within schools where CLIL was implemented, first becoming aware of CLIL, then expressing interest and finally attending training events and becoming CLIL practitioners. Second, the teacher education involvement contributed to the establishment of strong local communities of CLIL practitioners. Evidence of this includes the networking and sharing of ideas and materials within the four contexts, supported by frequent visits to schools, local conferences and materials workshops, support via telephone and email, and 'subject unit' guidelines, all led by the teacher educators. Thus 'CLIL teacher' has become a dimension of professional identity for the teachers involved (Miller, 2009). Teachers are very enthusiastic about CLIL, see their skills as part of their professional identity and wish to continue using these in their future teaching careers.

Support within Schools

CLIL is a demanding innovation for teachers and schools. As set out above, it has a dimension of increased productivity for teachers, and as such, it requires extra effort by teachers and others. CLIL works where there is commitment, energy, investment of time and a personal sense of professional stimulation and achievement on the part of CLIL professionals (both teachers and teacher educators). This factor in the implementation of CLIL reflects its fragility as an innovation: even in contexts where implementation is well-managed and successful, individual life experiences such as teacher illness, bereavement, disruption to school life (such as building problems) can easily damage the initiative. It is important that CLIL teams continue to expand, and communities of CLIL practice achieve critical mass so that the innovation is not undermined when one individual's commitment and key contribution is no

longer available. Important strategies here include head teachers becoming engaged in CLIL issues, encouraging other teachers in participating schools to become involved in CLIL, giving teachers time to prepare for CLIL, and recognising in social aspects the expertise CLIL involves. Such support within schools have had the following impacts within PROCLIL:

- i) the implementation of and then moving away from CLIL 'showers' and specific modules as a way on managing language and content input when complete integration seemed more practicable for teachers;
- ii) integration of English language lessons with CLIL classes so that these better support subject learning through English;
- iii) managing the placement of trainee teachers to support teachers with specific tasks such as preparing materials and worksheets and helping pupils who are experiencing difficulties;
- iv) linking materials development to school-based teacher training activities; and
- v) teacher trainers attending school meetings to provide parents with an informed, authoritative view of what CLIL.

Such engagement within schools develops school-level ownership of the CLIL initiative, and contributes to ongoing development of CLIL expertise where it really counts: in schools and classrooms. With this, develops an awareness that CLIL is not something which is transplanted from elsewhere, and teachers need to apply techniques with fidelity to models developed elsewhere. Rather, they understand the essential principles, and with support from the school community, they make it work for them. Within such a localisation approach, some trends across the four contexts of PROCLIL are evidenced, as a form of convergent evolution in addressing shared problems (Massler & Ionniou, 2010). Across all contexts and many schools there was

- An emphasis on experiments and practical activities which afford visual support and hands-on work as supportive contexts for understanding and using new vocabulary and talking about processes in subject curricula;
- Judicious mixing of two languages in CLIL classrooms, to meet the potentially opposing goals of use of the target language, and including all children in the learning experience;
- Trips and visits which offer diverse learning opportunities outside the classroom; and
- Support for learning through projects and worksheets in the classroom; and activities drawing on previous knowledge, including home knowledge of pupils.

These constitute a basis for ongoing research into understanding interaction in CLIL classrooms, content and language learning processes, and the strategies teachers deploy to ensure classrooms are effective and inclusive sites for learning.

Language Development

A major curricular question in the implementation of CLIL is the locus of English language teaching: is it solely in the CLIL classes or is it also in an English language class – a separate curricular strand where the focus is only on the development of language skills. In PROCLIL, no single approach was recommended. Rather each participating school developed an approach according to resources and best judgement of local stakeholders. The following models were described as part of the evaluation process.

- CLIL in a specific subject such as science, home economics or geography, and separate English lessons, but only for older children (8+), with teachers, where different, encouraged to plan input together;
- All English teaching within CLIL, with lessons varying from 15-30 minutes, depending on the age of the children;
- CLIL modules within subjects, where teachers used English-only instruction and bilingual input as required to include all pupils;
- Separate English language and subject syllabuses and teachers, with varying levels of integration, in terms of shared planning by teachers;
- CLIL implemented through a rigid English-only approach with some support from language assistants to support diverse learning needs;
- Subjects taught through L1, with CLIL showers later to develop English language learning, especially vocabulary;
- CLIL implemented almost wholly in English, but supported by additional English classes in private sector schools in the afternoons and evenings.

The evaluation did not have the purpose or resources to determine the comparative effectiveness of these approaches. Rather it sought to understand CLIL practice and the factors shaping this in the different contexts. To a large degree the major factor was a sense of what was possible, given human, material and time resources. This combined with a sense of tradition, of language learning and educational values, such that a starting platform could be established, and a process of gradual adaptation engaged to address needs and problems as these were understood.

Teaching Materials

A major success of the PROCLIL project was the handling of the learning materials issue. At the outset this was a major challenge: for their CLIL practice teachers needed learning materials and worksheets, which supported their level of competence and confidence in English and aligned to the forms of classroom activity with which they were familiar. As noted above much of the support afforded by the teacher education participants focussed on materials. This involved:

- carrying out specific materials evaluation studies (Massler et al., 2010) in order to provide materials which met teachers' and classroom needs in terms of language suitability, pedagogic orientation, subject level, and topic specificity;
- organising workshops and seminars to show available published materials and develop selection and adaptation skills;
- serving as a nexus for the exchange of worksheets and materials, including compiling these into modules and less structured collections available on project web-sites and intranets.

Overall the challenge of providing teachers with appropriate materials had *construct* and *compliance* dimensions. A *construct* perspective focuses on the quality of materials in terms of promoting learning, whether in English language or in subjects like science. This perspective is primarily informed by models of language development from second language acquisition (SLA), or sociocultural (SCT) theoretical frameworks. A *compliance* perspective focuses on the 'fit' to local contexts and curricular requirements, such as the requirement in Geography to relate concepts in topics such as climate and agriculture to the immediate environment of the school, or in Science to explore topics at the appropriate level. Materials may need to support teachers teaching 4th year science and 1st year English, or 4th year Science and 4th year English, depending on the particular features of CLIL implementation in schools. Through engaging with these broad construct and compliance issues, the evaluation identified a range of teacher skills and strategies which support the implementation of CLIL. These include:

- the design and classroom use of bilingual materials;
- the exploitation of visual and graphical materials which lessen the dependence on language;
- the adaptations made to published materials;
- teachers' own classroom implementation of language and content elements of materials; and
- teachers' use of shared materials available on the internet.

Materials issues thus become a training and learning context for teachers. They provide a way of demonstrating and talking about practice, of gaining insight into the practice of others, and of understanding principles of language and subject learning which might otherwise remain theoretical and inaccessible (Massler et al., 2010).

Continuity in Learning

A general requirement of school-based learning is continuity. This is especially the case in foreign or second language learning, where language learning research has documented systematicity, consistency and continuity as requirements for successful learning (Spolsky, 1989; Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Little & Perclova, 2000). Language learning is cumulative: there is little opportunity for fresh starts as with topics in subjects like geography or science, and achievements in learning depend on continuity in the curriculum, with opportunities to re-cycle and use. The *continuity in learning* issue is important for subject learning also, as in many contexts parents are concerned that progress in subject such as science may be hampered by the fact that it is taught in English rather than in L1. However, in CLIL implementation continuity is primarily a foreign language issue: if English is taught within CLIL for one or two years, but then pupils move to a class where the subject is taught in L1, the achievements in language learning may be soon lost. A fundamental criterion for the acceptability of CLIL as a pedagogic approach is the reasonable opportunity of each child to progress in subject learning. Continuity in language learning within CLIL is a central issue, since the motivation in introducing CLIL is more effective FL learning, not better outcomes in the subject area (See above). There are many challenges in ensuring continuity. In contexts such as Spain where there is an overall policy which requires 25% of school time in English, it is likely that continuity can be assured: schools recruit 'CLIL-ready' teachers as part of the implementation of this policy. In other contexts the challenge of continuity has to be managed within schools, and school networks. Particular problems are:

- The school is dependent on one or a few teachers to teach CLIL classes, so when pupils move to another class, the opportunity to continue with English is not there;
- Teachers' CLIL capacity within schools is in different subjects, so children progressing may have to switch from English with art, to English with geography;
- Children who move to secondary schools may not have the opportunity to continue with CLIL, but instead may have to start English again, in line with the traditional English (as first foreign language, for example) syllabus.

While the strategies to support CLIL within schools and the guidance provided by teacher education institutions may alleviate these problems, consideration in the wider context – the local education authority, or clusters of schools, for example – is required.

Conclusions and Recommendations

PROCLIL has been a success in many ways. It has examined issues of CLIL implementation and developed guidance on a range of issues for other implementation contexts. The approach to CLIL developed in the project is one which is dual-focussed (subject and language), mindful of the developmental stages and diverse needs of pupils, and is shaped by the socio-historical characteristics of each education context, the resources available, and the expertise in CLIL emerging in a range of European contexts. The approach, therefore is guided by shared principles, but looks different in each context of implementation. CLIL implementation, in terms of curriculum organisation and practices at school and classroom levels, varies from context to context, as local stakeholders, especially practitioners, respond to issues arising, analyse problems, and devise creative solutions. The capacity for such local decision-making varies, but where it is a strong feature, it appears to contribute to the development of expertise, professionalism and confidence in all CLIL implementation roles. It is the basis for effective management of innovation.

CLIL is an educational innovation with a distinct productivity dimension, which is reflected in the increased demands it places on teachers and schools. It is important in CLIL implementation that schools and teachers have effective support and resources. In PROCLIL the main support for teachers involved was provided by teacher education teams from Higher Education Institutions. These have proved effective partners, providing constant and appropriate support, assisting with developing materials and training activities, leading research, and liaising with other stakeholders such as local educational authorities and policy-makers. This leadership provides an effective environment for building local knowledge of how CLIL especially through work on materials and training activities, deepening this and through research in these areas. This included sharing it locally through in-service activities for teachers and schools, and extending it through communication nationally and internationally at conferences, seminars and workshops.

The focus of the evaluation and the issues discussed in this paper illustrate the diversity of CLIL implementation, and the many ways in which it can be successful. As is often the case with instructional approaches and methods, where there is motivation, engagement, ownership and creativity at the school and classroom level, practices which have little to commend them

theoretically can be successful. Without specifying methods or techniques for the implementation, this discussion can provide guidance at the policy level. This guidance is not recommendations, but issues to consider, set out here the form of questions for three stakeholder groups: policy-makers, practitioners and researchers. In addressing these questions, those planning to implement or extend CLIL will for themselves determine whether the conditions are positive and how the context can be enhanced.

Policy Makers

These stakeholders include educational administrators at national and local government levels and school leaders who decide on initiatives such as CLIL. For them, CLIL may appear to be a future-oriented, modernising, transforming policy initiative, which responds to parental requests and may bring additional funding to schools. While CLIL can be a vehicle for development in all these directions, it is only sustainable if careful consideration is given to contextual factors. Some of the issues they might consider are:

- Are teachers ready for CLIL in terms of skills and confidence?
- Are training measures in place to support all teachers, especially those new to CLIL?
- Is there a teacher education team in a Higher Education institution, which can be a partner in training and support?
- Where the CLIL initiative is in one school, are there links to other schools implementing CLIL?
- Are there additional resources in terms of teacher time and materials to support CLIL implementation?
- Will there be continuity in FL learning, throughout the school, and in the context of transition to other schools?
- Are there measures in place to support the learning of children who do not progress as anticipated in FL learning?
- Is there support from parents, and how can this be sustained where FL progress is slow, erratic or perceived as a barrier to subject learning?

Practitioners

These stakeholders include teachers and classroom assistants. For them CLIL may be a context of professional stimulation and personal growth, a welcome extension of professional identity and skills, or an additional challenge to a demanding task. Some of the issues they might consider are:

- Is there an agreed structure (for example, Common European Framework of Reference for foreign language learning (CEFR), syllabus, scheme of work, course book) to guide FL learning and to integrate it with subject learning?
- Are there materials to support this structure, or processes to assist the teacher in developing materials?
- As practitioners establish effective CLIL implementation, are they describing this and communicating it to wider CLIL audiences?
- Does this structure interface with assessment processes and progression from year to year in the school and between schools?
- Are there guidelines on the language of classroom interaction and materials/worksheets, for example, FL only, mix of FL and L1, FL in interaction but L1 allowed in worksheets?
- How can support and training be accessed – through training at the start, ongoing training as CLIL is implemented, or regular visits to schools by CLIL trainers and advisors?
- Is there a community of CLIL practitioners, or do CLIL teachers work in isolation?
- Where CLIL is initiated by schools or teachers, are there measures to involve policy makers at school governance, and local and national government levels?

Researchers

These stakeholders include all those committed to building knowledge and understanding to support the effective implementation of CLIL, especially the policy-makers and practitioners listed above. The issues for them are also issues for research: policy and practice develop from knowledge and understanding. Research leadership and much of its implementation, however, rest with university-based specialists in curriculum, teacher education, and language learning and teaching. Each of these areas will have its own CLIL research agenda. Here the focus is on implementation, with particular reference to situations where the CLIL initiative is local, and new to schools and teachers. The research focus is understanding *ecological fit* (Kramsch, 2008) that is, explaining how CLIL practice meshes with social, cultural and historical aspects of the school context, and the theoretical perspectives from language and subject learning and teaching. Some of the issues which relate to policy development include:

- To what extent does CLIL contribute to language and subject learning gains?
- Which conditions and classroom practices are linked to these gains, and thus illustrate situated effective CLIL?

- How do language choices and the mix of languages (FL and L1) shape language learning opportunities in classroom interaction, and in worksheets?
- How do teachers monitor or maintain awareness of progress of children in the subject and in the FL, and how is this reflected in classroom-based assessment and feedback?
- How do teachers support children who find either the FL or the subject difficult?
- How do teachers support children from minority ethnic and language groups for whom the L1 of the majority is an additional language?
- How do teachers adapt materials and worksheets from published books and websites?
- How is homework and involvement of parents and carers integrated into the CLIL curriculum?
- How is continuity within schools and between schools managed for effective progression in both subject and FL?

These questions for researchers are not intended as a framework for understanding CLIL as a curriculum model which can be generalised to new contexts. They combine with the questions for policy-makers and practitioners to address the issues which will shape CLIL in each context of implementation. Exploring these issues adds texture to the general message that CLIL can work, but will be challenging for teachers and schools, and additional resources may be required.

CLIL initiatives start in different ways, and can be successful through the commitment, energy and creativity of a small team. To sustain this success, the factors which contribute to it, which may be intuitive and tacit, need to be examined, understood, and shared. These questions are set out as an initial framework for raising awareness of CLIL as an innovation which has the potential to transform teaching and learning, but which is complex, and demands more of teachers than non-CLIL school contexts. Where these issues are understood, and their development is a context of for organisational learning and shared understanding, CLIL may indeed deliver on its much vaunted promise.

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